

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 USPS-01 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 /051 W

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6217

UNCLAS OTTAWA 1463

POUCHED INFO ALL CG'S CANADA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB,CA

SUBJECT: LETTER CARRIERS UNION ON ROTATING STRIKE

1. LETTER CARRIERS UNION OF CANADA (LCUC) REPRESENTING APPROXIMATELY 16,000 POSTMEN AND MAIL TRUCK DRIVERS INITIATED NATION-WIDE ROTATING STRIKE ACTION APRIL 21 TO EXERT PRESSURE ON POST OFFICE TO ACCEPT CONCILIATION BOARD RECOMMENDATION ON WAGES AND CONTROVERSIAL COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) SOUGHT BY UNION NEGOTIATORS. CONCILIATION BOARD PROPOSED 38 PERCENT WAGE INCREASE IN TWO-YEAR CONTRACT WHICH POST OFFICE FIRST REJECTED BUT WOULD NOW ACCEPT WITHOUT COLA PROVISION HOWEVER. POSTMASTER GENERAL INDICATED YESTERDAY THAT HE MIGHT APPROVE A COLA CLAUSE WHICH WOULD BE PRECEDENT-SETTING IN POSTAL NEGOTIATIONS IF OVERALL COST OF SETTLEMENT PROVES ACCEPTABLE.

2. LCUC HAS BEEN IN LEGAL POSITION TO STRIKE SINCE APRIL 14. ROTATING WORK STOPPAGES CONDUCTED YESTERDAY IN SEVERAL ONTARIO COMMUNITIES INCLUDING OTTAWA AND MOVED TODAY (APRIL 22) TO ATLANTIC PROVINCES. QUEBEC CITY AND SEVERAL OTHER PROVINCIAL CENTERS LAUNCHED STRIKE WITHOUT NATIONAL UNION HEADQUARTERS AUTHORIZATION LAST WEEK, AND PRESS REPORTS POSSIBLE STRIKE IN MONTREAL THIS WEEK. MONTREAL SITUATION COMPLICATED BY DISPUTE BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND CANADIAN

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UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS (CUPW REPRESENTS INSIDE EMPLOYEES)

OVER TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF SEVERAL HUNDRED AN FIRING
OF SOME OVERZEALOUS MILITANTS WHO MISHANDLED SOME CASUAL
WORKERS EMPLOYED TO REDUCE LARGE BACKLOG OF MAIL. SINCE
NEGOTIATIONS WITH LCUC AND CUPW ARE SEPARATE, A SETTLEMENT
WITH THE LETTER CARRIERS MAY SET PATTERN FOR INSIDE POSTAL
WORKERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN NEGOTIATION, ALTHOUGH THERE
IS NO GUARANTEE THAT CUPW, WHICH ENTERED CONTRACT TALKS
WITH A RIDICULOUS 70 PERCENT WAGE DEMAND AND INSISTENCE
ON MAKING TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES A BARGAINABLE ISSUE,
MAY NOT LOCK ITSELF INTO STRIKE-PRONE POSITION.
PORTER

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